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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/45/748)]

45/91. Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its relevant resolutions, including resolution 37/52 of 3 December 1982, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, 1/ and resolution 37/53 of 3 December 1982, in which, inter alia, it proclaimed the period 1983-1992 the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons as a long-term plan of action,

Recalling also its resolution 43/98 of 8 December 1988, in which it urged Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned to translate into action at all levels, as appropriate, the priorities for global activities and programmes during the second half of the Decade, such as those set forth in the annex to the resolution,

Recalling further the request to the Secretary-General made in its resolution 43/98 to conduct a feasibility study on the substantive, financial and administrative implications of alternative ways to mark the end of the Decade in 1992, which would include a review of the global progress achieved and obstacles encountered during the Decade and which would provide a mechanism for preparing the actions needed until the year 2000 and beyond,

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1/ A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation 1 (IV).

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/52 of 24 May 1989, in particular paragraph 9, in which the Council invited the Secretary-General, in connection with the preparation of the feasibility study, to convene an expert meeting in 1990 to advise on the best possible ways of marking the end of the Decade,

Having considered with interest and appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility study on alternative ways to mark the end of the Decade, 2/ which was based on the outcome of a meeting of experts held at Järvenpää, Finland, from 7 to 11 May 1990, at the generous invitation and with the financial support of the Government of Finland,

Taking note of the suggestion contained in the report of the Secretary-General to consider the proposal for a ministerial-level world conference to mark the end of the Decade, 3/

Bearing in mind Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/26 of 24 May 1990 on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons, in which the Council authorized the Commission for Social Development to consider, at its thirty-second session, the establishment of an ad hoc open-ended working group of government experts, funded by voluntary contributions, to elaborate standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled children, youth and adults,

Noting with satisfaction that the 1980s, during which the International Year of Disabled Persons and the Decade were observed, were a period of world-wide sensitization and awareness-raising efforts with respect to the rights and needs of disabled persons,

Convinced of the need to transform this awareness into action,

Noting with concern the deteriorating economic and social situation of some developing countries, which adversely affects vulnerable groups, including disabled persons,

Aware of the need for new and concerted efforts, more vigorous and broader action, and measures at all levels to fulfil the objectives of the Decade,

Expressing its appreciation for the efforts of a number of Member States during the Decade to improve the conditions and well-being of disabled persons and the willingness of those States to involve disabled persons and their organizations in all matters of concern to them,

Aware of the problem arising in some countries in relation to the translation of the terms "impairment", "disability", "handicap" and "disabled person" used in the World Programme of Action,

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2/ A/45/470.

3/ Ibid., para. 14.

Noting with gratitude the generous support to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons provided by some Governments through voluntary contributions,

Aware of the important role national committees are playing in furthering the implementation of the World Programme of Action,

Encouraged by the emergence of organizations of disabled persons in some parts of the world and their positive influence on the image and condition of persons with disabilities,

Recognizing the World Congress of Rehabilitation International, the World Congress of Disabled Peoples' International, the General Assembly of the World Blind Union, Independence '92 and other such important events to be held in 1992 as important activities helping to mark the end of the Decade,

Noting the important contribution being made by other non-governmental organizations in improving the status of persons with disabilities,

Desirous of encouraging the continued and practical implementation of the World Programme of Action beyond the Decade,

1. Stresses the need to achieve the objectives set out in the agenda for action until the end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and beyond 4/ and the preliminary outline of a long-term strategy to the year 2000 and beyond: a society for all, 5/ as contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility study on alternative ways to mark the end of the Decade;

2. Invites Member States, specialized agencies and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to implement the agenda for action and the preliminary outline and to use them as guidelines and stimuli in preparing:

(a) National, regional and international agendas for action aimed at mounting well-focused activities at all levels to benefit people with disabilities in ways that are in conformity with the culture, customs, traditions, level of socio-economic development and resource constraints of each country;

(b) Long-term strategic plans with precise targets to be reached in the field of prevention, rehabilitation and equality of opportunities by the year 2000;

3. Affirms that, in implementing the agenda for action, special attention should be given to the disabled in developing countries;

4/ Ibid., sect. III.

5/ Ibid., sect. IV.

4. Requests the Secretary-General to shift the focus of the United Nations programme on disability from awareness-raising to action, with the aim of achieving a society for all by the year 2010 and of responding more appropriately to the many requests for assistance and advisory services;

5. Stresses the need for priority to be given, within existing resources, to action-oriented programmes that will renew international consensus on and elicit a sustained political commitment by Member States to the implementation of the World Programme of Action beyond the Decade and will ensure the continued improvement of the situation of disabled persons;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to assist Member States in establishing and strengthening national committees on disability issues and similar co-ordinating bodies and to promote and support the establishment of effective national organizations of disabled persons, including umbrella organizations;

7. Also requests the Secretary-General to review the translation into the official languages of the United Nations of the terms "impairment", "disability", "handicap" and "disabled person" used in the World Programme of Action;

8. Emphasizes the need to identify specific measures to strengthen the Disabled Persons Unit of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, within existing resources, in order to enable it to implement the objectives of the Decade;

9. Welcomes the support already provided by some Governments to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and appeals for further voluntary contributions in order to strengthen the Disabled Persons Unit and to enable it to perform its focal-point functions;

10. Reaffirms that the resources of the Voluntary Fund should be used to support catalytic and innovative activities in order to implement further the objectives of the World Programme of Action within the framework of the Decade, with priority given, as appropriate, to programmes and projects of the least developed countries;

11. Invites Governments and non-governmental organizations to continue their contributions to the Voluntary Fund, and calls upon Governments and non-governmental organizations that have not yet done so to consider contributing to the Voluntary Fund so as to enable it to respond effectively to the growing demand for assistance;

12. Also invites Member States to submit updated national reports to the Secretary-General on the implementation of the agenda for action;

13. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

14. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-sixth session the item entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons".

68th plenary meeting
14 December 1990